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BOOK NOTICES.

Le Commerce Algérien. Par P. Delorme. (2 vols.) Vol. 1, vii and 472 pp.; Vol. 2, pp. 463 and lxiv. Many Statistical Tables. Government of Algeria, Algiers, 1906.

An exhaustive study of the commerce of Algeria from the point not only of its present condition, but also as to its development and future possibilities. The author examines closely into every field of productivity and the evidences affecting it. He treats, for example, not only of the production of and commerce in cereals in Algeria, but also in other countries, to show the relative position which Algeria occupies and the exterior influences which may affect her own productivity and trade. Every relation which Algeria sustains to France and foreign countries is carefully set forth. The work, therefore, contains not only a vast amount of information about the production and trade of Algeria but much relating to other lands. The section on olive oil, an important product of Algeria, for example, practically includes a study of the world's production and trade in this commodity. The statistical tables are very numerous and complete.

Marokkanische Sittenbilder. Von Grethe Auer. 308 pp. A. Francke, Bern, 1906. (Price, M. 3. 50.)

The author of this book lived for some years on the Atlantic coast of Morocco. She had excellent opportunities to study the life of the people, both on the coast and in the western interior. Her books, of which this is the latest, are composed of sketches of the country, the customs of the people, their industries, the philosophy of their lives, travel experiences, scenery and other geographical aspects. This book, like its predecessors, is written with much literary skill. The author is a keen observer, and her work has been accepted in Europe as a valuable contribution to literature on Morocco. Among the chapters in this volume those describing travel in Morocco, the life of the female slave Yakut, and how the locusts came to Mazagan, are especially informing.

Jamaica. Painted by A. S. Forrest, described by John Henderson. x and 179 pp., 24 coloured Illustrations. Adam and Charles Black, London, and The Macmillan Co., New York, 1906.

A series of sketches of Jamaica dealing with the negroes more largely than with the other inhabitants, which is perhaps not surprising, as the island has a coloured population of about 700,000 and less than 20,000 whites. The book treats nothing exhaustively, but gives such impressions as come to an observant traveller with sufficient leisure to see many things. Geography is subordinated to pen-pictures of native life and the aspects of the racecourse, the military camp, the courts of justice, such sport as alligator-shooting affords, black and white politics, and many other matters. The chapter on the railroad, however, supplies many glimpses of agricultural Jamaica, with its fields of pineapples, its pimento groves, and bananas. The commercial chapter gives the reasons for the once-ebbing fortunes of the island. The sugar-planters still manage to eke out an existence, and are now introducing new methods of manufacture that are likely to save them from many of the failures that have afflicted them in the past generation.

The author says that, though the colony is British in name, it is really quite as much American as British; which is to be expected, as the United States take four-fifths of the exports and supply over one-half of the imports. The concluding chapters are of special interest to tourists, telling them of much that they should see and of many things they should not do. The numerous water-colours are a very attractive feature of the book.

Indiscreet Letters from Peking, being the Notes of an Eye-Witness, which set forth in some Detail, from Day to Day, the Real Story of the Siege and Sack of a Distressed Capital in 1900—the Year of Great Tribulation. Edited by B. L. Putnam Weale. New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1907. 447 p.

A German professor of law once made the psychology of the testimonies of eye-witnesses the subject of his investigations with a body of students. One of the exercises consisted in the following experiment. Suddenly, during the discussions, several students, on previous agreement with the instructor, but without the knowledge of the rest, arose and produced a sham-fight for just a few minutes, and the other students were then assigned the task of writing down their observations as in an affidavit, with the result that their depositions varied most widely and not one tallied with another. I never fail to think of this experiment whenever I try to compare and to reconcile the various reports given by eye-witnesses of the Boxer uprising and the siege of Peking. Much has been published about these events—much of very contradictory character—but it is nevertheless impossible to sift the truth in all points, or even in just those which are important, and to write the real history of that unprecedented movement and the reaction that followed it. Every new contribution, whether in the form of a diary or of memoirs, which may tend to clear up the situation during that epoch, or even some incidents only, must therefore be welcome as building material for the future historian. From this point of view the present publication secures its passport of legitimacy, despite its appearance so long *post festum*. The preface is dated "China, June, 1900," which is evidently an error, as at the close of it the siege of Port Arthur is alluded to, and the last chapters of the diary carry us down to October, 1900. The diary itself does not in all places convey the impression that it was actually and contemporaneously penned during the course of the events; many passages breathe too much foresight of what is to come, and in others the retouching becomes plain from an additional "as I shall show hereafter." When we are assured by the foreword that "much in these notes has had to be suppressed for many reasons, and much that remains may create some astonishment," it is to be regretted that no more vigorous and self-denying editing has been applied to a volume in which valuable accounts are intermingled with numerous worthless personal details and an obtrusive, most unpleasant animosity towards nearly every participant in the affairs. The unreserved exposure of the irritable nerves of the diary-writer, who gives vent to his pent-up anger at the inefficient diplomats in language not always diplomatic, leaves a bitter taste in the mouth of the reader, and thus many of his statements lose their convincing force. The reviewer speaks advisedly, as he had the pleasure of knowing personally most of the men, who are cited in the diary with their initials only. True it is—and in this point we concur with the diarist—that the extraordinary situation did not find the right man to face it, and that the only man who was probably equal to it met a premature and tragical fate; but we must not forget that such an extraordinary situation called for an extraordinary man, and that not all men are extraordinary, even if they are envoys